Life Writer Called By Mafia Probers

5/28/70

By BILL LYNCH

BATON ROUGE — A member of the legislative investigating committee probing the Mafia today said a subpoena has been issued to David L. Chandler, author of a critical Life magazine article, to appear before the committee at its next meeting.

Rep. Lonnie O. Aulds of Shreveport disclosed the information as the House debated and subsequently defeated a resolution calling for intervention by the legislature in Gov. John J. McKeithen's suit against Life.

He said he had been authorized by the chairman, Sen. Adrian G. Duplantier, to disclose that the Chandler subpoena had been issued for the June 10 session of the committee.

REP. PAREY Branton of Shongaloo was trying to push a resolution through calling for the attorney general and legislative auditor to intervene in the governor's $10 million libel suit and push for a speedy trial.

The house voted, 79 to 12 against the resolution after rejecting a bid by Branton to

Earlier story on Page 1.

return the measure to the calendar until after the June 10 hearing.

Branton said because of the court suit, Life magazine would not honor the subpoena and the only way to get information from Chandler on details of the allegations in the Life magazine story is to conclude the trial.

"If the suit lies dormant," he said, "we'll never hear from Chandler."

IN NEW ORLEANS, a spokesman for Cicero Sessions, attorney for Chandler and Life magazine, said Chandler "will obey the law."

He said this does not necessarily mean Chandler will respond to the subpoena but that the attorneys will look into all aspects of the matter and determine whether the writer should appear before the panel.

"If it is determined he should respond, he will respond," the spokesman said.

McKeithen filed the suit on behalf of the state and a $2 million libel suit was filed by Emmett Batson, attorney for the State Department of Revenue, one of the persons cited in the story about organized crime and its influence on government.

Rep. H. B. DeJean of Opelousas said as a legislator he does not want to be party to

See CHANDLER—Page 4

Chandler

Continued from Front Page

the suit because he had done nothing wrong.

REP. SALVADOR Anzelmo of New Orleans, who objected to the resolution, said there were no allegations in the story of corruption in the Legislature.

Several members of the Mafia investigating committee also took the microphone.

Rep. Carl Bauer of Franklin said it is beginning to appear there are definite efforts to thwart the investigation. He criticized a television show which he said characterized the committee members as buffoons for rearranging furniture in the hearing room.

"This committee is organized, it's going to try . . . We are going to work," Bauer said. "We just want a chance to start."

BAUER ALSO attacked a House-passed bill calling for equalized authority on the committee for citizen advisors, saying it would force the issue into courts. He was reminded by Branton that the Legislature had approved the state labor-management commission and gave subpoena powers to citizens.

Branton called for "a real investigation" of the Life charges.

"All you hear in the corridors of this building is whitewash," he said.

Rep. George B. Holstead of Ruston, another committee member, said adoption of the resolution would put the Legislature in absurd position of attacking the Life article while conducting an investigation to determine its veracity.

CHANDLER IS a resident of New Orleans, although the magazine is headquartered in New York. The magazine's attorneys have had both suits transferred from state to federal courts and asked for dismissal.

Branton charged that a prohibition against citizens committee questions to witnesses in the probe has relegated them to fourth-class citizenship.

"Many members of that advisory committee are now thinking of getting off of it entirely," Branton said.

Branton said the citizens advisory committee members are disgruntled about the fact that they may not question witnesses appearing before the legislative committee, but can only pass notes.